



CORPORATE SAFEGUARDING BOARD – 22ND MAY 2023

SUBJECT: ANNUAL CORPORATE SAFEGUARDING REPORT 2022/23

REPORT BY: SERVICE MANAGER FOR SAFEGUARDING

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide the Corporate Safeguarding Board with an update on progress made during the 2022/23 financial year.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 The Board was established in February 2015 following a review by Audit Wales, formally the Welsh Audit Office (WAO) of Caerphilly County Borough Council's (the Council) assurance and accountability arrangements for ensuring that safeguarding policies and procedures were in place and being adhered to. On 17th November 2015, the Corporate Safeguarding Policy was ratified at full Council.
- 2.2 Audit Wales subsequently undertook a follow-up review of arrangements in 2019 and identified a number of areas for improvement and consideration. A comprehensive Action Plan was developed in response which was monitored and signed off by the Board. Since that time a Forward Work Programme was developed and reviewed via the Board regarding the progress of work under the auspice of corporate safeguarding.
- 2.3 This is the 8th Annual Report which provides an overview of the progression of the Forward Work Programme during 2022/2023 and safeguarding practices across the Council.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The Board is requested to:
- note the content of the Annual Report including the recommendations
 - note the progress made regarding the Forward Work Programme
 - approve the Report being presented to Corporate Management Team, Social Services Scrutiny Committee and Audit Committee in due course

4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 To ensure the Board is fully aware of the Council's arrangements for corporate safeguarding and is satisfied that these arrangements are effective.

5. THE REPORT

5.1 During 2022/23, safeguarding children and adults has continued to be the main objective in Social Services. As reported last year, management and operational structures have remained consistent in both Children and Adult Services, this has ensured the continued consistency of safeguarding practices and the availability of support regarding safeguarding on a corporate level.

5.2 The 2021/22 Annual Report was agreed by Board on the 6th of June 2022, where the following recommendations were agreed to continue this work, via the Forward Work Programme, into 2022/23:

- Implement the National Safeguarding Training Framework in November 2022 and, in response, review the training currently under the Corporate Safeguarding Training Framework
- Make the Group 'A' eLearning Module available on the Learning@Wales website under the Caerphilly page, alongside VAWDASV Ask and Act Group 1 eLearning Module and Caerphilly's Tier 1 Corporate Safeguarding Video (Welsh and English)
- Review of Internal Audit's findings, when available
- Incorporate the previous AMBER issues into the Forward Work Programme
- Self-assessments to be reviewed and updated annually by DSO's
- The Safeguarding Media Campaign to be implemented
- Deliver Tier 1 Safeguarding Training to CMT and Elected Members following the 2022 Elections
- Continue to monitor the progress of the Learning Management System (LMS) Project
- Progress work on developing a consistent approach to corporate safeguarding practices across Gwent, including development of a comparator key data set and a regional self-assessment tool
- Continue to invite speakers to attend the Designated Safeguarding Officers (DSO) Development Group regarding relevant safeguarding topics
- Reduce Board meetings from quarterly to twice per year (6 monthly) with the DSO Development Group continuing to meet quarterly.

Overall progress to date

5.4 The DSO Development Group has continued via the virtual platform (MS Teams) and DSO's report via this group positive support and assistance regarding safeguarding matters received from the Adult Safeguarding Team Manager, Child Protection Coordinator and Safeguarding Service Manager. Attendance has continued to be positive. The knowledge base of the DSO's has continued to be supported via presentations and discussions on relevant safeguarding matters which will be an ongoing recommendation. The group has met virtually on the following dates:

- 11.07.2022
- 03.10.2022
- 16.01.2023

A meeting scheduled for the 15th May 2023 was postponed due to the Safeguarding Service Manager being absent from work for a period of time and the closeness of the date to the Board meeting scheduled for the 22nd May 2023.

- 5.5 As recommended and agreed in the last Annual Report, the Board has met twice a year, this was reduced from quarterly. This reduction in meetings has not had any impact on the progression of corporate safeguarding tasks and the Forward Work Programme is regularly reviewed in the DSO Development group to ensure progression of recommended actions. The Board met on 2nd June and 5th December 2022.
- 5.6 The recommendations for future work relating to corporate safeguarding have been captured in the Forward Work Programme. This was reviewed in preparation for Board and is attached as Appendix 1. The following points are noteworthy regarding the Red/Amber/Green (RAG) rating status:
- a. Recommendation 1: (RAG rated Amber) Relates to the delivery of safe recruitment training supported via HR. This work is progressing, and an eLearning Presentation has been developed which will be rolled out to all employees involved in the recruitment process during 2023/2024.
 - b. Recommendation 4: (RAG rated Amber). This relates to Corporate Safeguarding Training. A number of actions are highlighted as Green under this recommendation. However, the completion of safeguarding training for CMT and Elected members is Amber due to the numbers of said employees who have not completed the training as requested by the end of February 2023. Also Amber in this section is the Tier 1 videos for basic awareness being made available only to Caerphilly Employees, a solution is still being sought. Monitoring of training continues to be rated Amber and this will be discussed further in the report. The work related to the National Safeguarding Training Framework is rated as RED as the launch is not expected now until November 2023.
 - c. Recommendation 6: (RAG rated Amber). The final report from Internal Audit is still awaited. Comments from 3 service areas are required prior to the final report being completed.
 - d. Recommendation 7: (RAG rated Amber). This relates to the develop of the Corporate Safeguarding Credit Card leaflet. This has been written and translated to Welsh, final printed version of both the English and Welsh version is required. This has been based on an example used in Leisure Services and will made available to all staff during 2023/24.
 - e. Recommendation 8: (RAG rated Amber). The work relating to the LMS system has progressed and reference to the current position is highlighted further in the report.
 - f. Recommendation 10: (RAG rated Amber). The regional work regarding corporate safeguarding arrangements has made progress over the last year. A regional self assessment tool has been agreed, progress has also been made on a shared key data set. However, consideration of training remains rated Red as this is impacted by the National Safeguarding Training Framework. This work does not put the Council at any risk, this work will strengthen corporate safeguarding practices on a regional level.

- 5.7 As noted in last years report, the Corporate Safeguarding Training Framework was implemented in November 2019 however, training delivery was impacted by Covid 19. Over this past year, delivery of training has progressed and Tier 2 sessions have been delivered via service areas, supplemented by sessions delivered by the Adult Safeguarding Team Manager and Child Protection Coordinator. Tier 3 sessions for Children's Safeguarding are now available through the Gwent Safeguarding Board and Tier 3 Advanced Adult Safeguarding has been delivered via the Adult Safeguarding Team. Tier 1 Basic Awareness has been available in several formats including a SWAY presentation, a written presentation and videos. Also available is Group A of the National Safeguarding Training Framework which is available via the Councils page on the learning@wales website. CMT and Elected members have been asked to complete this however, only 13 elected members have completed this to date, with several others making contact with the Workforce Development Team due to difficult accessing the eLearning. Having reviewed this eLearning package and the fact that it forms the basis of Group A in the National Safeguarding Training Framework, it would seem reasonable at this stage to recommend that all employees who require Tier 1 Basic Awareness training now be directed to complete Group A training. This will allow relevant officers to concentrate on ensuring that Tier 2 training is in line with Group B of the framework.
- 5.8 The recording and monitoring of safeguarding training and the delivery of training continue to be risks to the Council. Being unable to monitor and track safeguarding training consistently across all service areas is a concern. The current process of recording training in Itrent is very reliant on reporting by managers and those who deliver training. It is envisaged that further developments in Itrent may assist with the recording and monitoring of training. Collaboration will also take place with the Workforce Development Team regarding the National Safeguarding Training Framework in order to consider specific employee roles and how they fit into the framework to ensure the correct level of training is identified. This will be a large piece of work and will take time to embed, along with ensuring that all corporate training packages meet the standards outline din the National Framework.
- 5.9 As noted in 5.6 (e) above, the work regarding the LMS system has progressed to the conclusion of the Welsh Government funded BETA Phase. The LMS would enable the delivery of corporate safeguarding training to be monitored and provide employees with prompts when they need to undertake refresher training. This would give the Council much better assurance that employees are complaint with safeguarding training requirements. There is currently a working prototype from a provider called Thingi, the prototype is pre-set with the requirements of the Council and the other consortium LA's. The finalisation of the procurement process on behalf of all Local Authorities in Wales is taking place and communication to all Authorities will be sent out seeking an update on their position to be part of this project. This procurement process is being run by Blaenau Gwent CBC in conjunction with their Legal team on behalf of all Local Authorities in Wales. It is important to note that any implementation times scales could be extensive. A partnership agreement between Carmarthenshire CC, BGCBC and CCBC has allowed the appointment of a systems implementation expert, initially from April to June 2023. Welsh Government will fund the majority of this cost.

- 5.10 From an Education perspective, safeguarding continues to be a priority and is fully recognised within their Service Improvement Plan. For the year 2022/2023, 42 schools received a Safeguarding audit, 40 schools were RAG rated Green, 1 Amber and 1 red. Actions were put in place immediately to respond to the Amber and Red Audit outcomes. Ensuring safeguarding training for all schools is a priority. To support safeguarding in education, a Safeguarding Officer was recruited to meet the needs and demands of safeguarding in education. All schools continue to receive safeguarding training on a 3 yearly basis which is monitored and supported via train the trainer model with Head Teachers, with 34 Head Teachers receiving training in this relevant year. LEA staff also receive the required level of safeguarding training (239) as do school Governors, around 149 governors have attended training via the Governor Network. The Safeguarding Lead in Education and the Safeguarding Service Manager meet on a monthly basis to discuss any required matters relating to safeguarding and there is regular liaison with the Child Protection Coordinator.
- 5.11 Self Assessments for 2022/2023 have been completed and submitted by all but 2 service areas. Internal Audit are currently reviewing the self assessment process and as stated, their final report is awaited. The self-assessments for 2022/2023 have been reviewed by the Safeguarding Service Manager with the following Red and Amber matters being identified that will need further work during 2023/2024:
- Ensuring all DSO's are fully aware of the Corporate Safeguarding Training requirements for the role of the DSO, this is an identified need where there is a change of DSO or cover arrangements within a service area.
 - Reinforcement of the Procurement Safeguarding Protocol for all newly commissioned providers, again an identified need for new DSO's or those undertaking cover arrangements
 - Monitoring and tracking of employees completion of safeguarding training has continued to be Amber rated for several service areas, along with resource availability to provide Tier 2 safeguarding training in specific service areas
 - Reinforcing the need for 3 year refresher training was highlighted by 1 service area and Rag rated RED.
 - Implementation of the National Safeguarding Training framework and the need to update the Corporate Safeguarding Training Framework so this is in line with the national framework
 - Ensuring that the corporate safeguarding responsibility is included in all Job Descriptions was also highlighted in some self-assessments, however this matter is being managed by HR when JD's are being reviewed and updated and has been discussed in the DSO Development Group
 - Safe Recruitment training continues to be highlighted as an Amber issue, however there is a plan via HR to roll out relevant training.
 - Implementation of Agile Working policy has also highlighted as an area for further consideration related to access to buildings.

Planned Future Work

- 5.13 The following recommendations are made for 2023/24:

- All new starters complete the Group A eLearning module available on the Caerphilly Page of the Learning@Wales digital platform
- HR induction process to be updated to reflect this for all new employees
- Update the Caerphilly Safeguarding Training Framework for all PC users to complete Group A as their Tier 1 basic awareness training. The Tier 1 safeguarding videos, SWAY presentation and written presentation for Basic awareness can still be available for non PC users as required
- Roll out the Corporate Safeguarding Credit Card leaflet for use by service areas – printing costs need to be approved.
- Safe Recruitment training plan to be developed so that this is made available to all those involved in the recruitment process
- Implement the Gwent regional self-assessment format for 2023/24 and begin discussions about comparison data being collected to report during the year
- On going liaison with the Workforce Development Team and links to Itrent to improve data collection for safeguarding training and consider job roles to specific levels of safeguarding training requirements
- Review the Corporate Safeguarding Training Framework in line with the National Safeguarding Training Framework after November 2023
- Continue to invite speakers to the DSO Development Group to increase knowledge of DSO's on matters relating to safeguarding
- Review the current work and decision making relating to the LMS
- Incorporate the amber/red rated issues from the self-assessments into the forward work programme as agreed by the DSO Development Group.

6. **ASSUMPTIONS**

- 6.1 There are no assumptions made or presumed in this report.

7. **INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

- 7.1 This report is for information purposes only, so the Council's full Integrated Impact Assessment process does not need to be applied.

8. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 As noted in the previous Annual Reports, safeguarding awareness training has been provided within existing resources and this has continued to date.
- 8.2 The National Safeguarding Training Framework which is now due to be launched in November 2023, is likely to require consideration of who facilitates training for safeguarding leads and those roles within the safeguarding process. Such training may need to be commissioned. It is hoped that there will be further clarity around this including the development of national training packages by November 2023.
- 8.3 As noted in previous years report there are likely to be costs associated with the LMS system. This work has been progressing and is being worked in partnership with other Local Authorities. Final costs are yet to be known, the procurement process is being finalised.

9. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are no personnel or HR implications arising from this report.

10. CONSULTATIONS

10.1 The report is for information purposes and reflects the views of consultees.

11. STATUTORY POWER

11.1 Social Services & Well Being (Wales) Act 2014

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Cllr Elaine Forehead, Cabinet Member for Social Services and Chair of the
Corporate Safeguarding Board
The Corporate Safeguarding Board
The DSO Development Group

Appendix 1: Forward Work Programme